

Secret Berlin 7

July 5, 1961

Mac -

Isn't it time for some bipartisan consultation re Berlin?

As a starter, why not have the President ask General Eisenhower in for a chat?

I suspect the operation would be most successful if the President didn't ask his support for a specific program but rather informed him of some of the questions that are now uppermost in his mind, and talked them over with Eisenhower, seeking his counsel. I suspect this approach would be much appreciated by the General, and would help set the stage for later more pointed consultation looking to support of specific administration proposals.

A Kennedy-Eisenhower get-together would be particularly timely, in view of Nixon's recent thinly veiled attacks on the Administration for expected weakness on Berlin. The best way to prevent or neutralize such attacks would be to associate Eisenhower with formulation of our policy. It might be especially useful if the President could begin talking to Eisenhower about the issue of East German "paper stamping" before Nixon starts singling this out as the test of true manhood.

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Henry Owen

Mr. Bundy